

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BANGKO 08618 281309Z

51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 NEA-14 IO-14 OMB-01

ABF-01 TRSE-00 EB-11 DRC-01 /141 W

----- 058490

O R 281114Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3644

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

S E C R E T BANGKOK 8618

CINCPAC ALSO PASS POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SEATO

SUBJ: SEATO: EMBASSY COMMENTS ON RTG STATEMENT

REF: A. STATE 81415 B. BANGKOK 8534

1. RTG/PWG MEMBER AT MAY 28 MEETING ANNOUNCED THAT HIS MAY 24 ORAL STATEMENT WAS NOT REPEAT NOT AN OFFICIAL RTG POLICY PAPER. THIS CONFIRMED OUR BELIEF THAT RTG HAD NOT APPROVED ANY BASIC POLICY SHIFT REGARDING SEATO, BUT THAT STATEMENT WAS INTENDED AS A PETULANT TACTICAL MOVE TO ATTRACT SEATO MEMBERS' ATTENTION TO THE CONTINUING EROSION OF THE ORGANIZATION AND PERHAPS HEAD OFF PRESSURES FROM NON-REGIONAL MEMBERS FOR SEVERE FY 75 BUDGET CUT.

2. WHEN QUERIED, RTG DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI CHUNHAWAN TOLD CHARGE AT MAY 25 ARGENTINE DAY RECEPTION THAT HE WAS UNIN-  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BANGKO 08618 281309Z

FORMED ABOUT THE STATEMENT AND EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO REQUEST A

COPY FROM CHARGE. AT SAME TIME CHATCHAI AFFIRMED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN RTG POLICY TOWARD SEATO AND THAT SANYA CABINET (WHICH HAD JUST RESIGNED) HAD REAFFIRMED RTG SUPPORT FOR ORGANIZATION. ACCORDING TO THAI PWG MEMBER, CHATCHAI'S SUBSEQUENT INQUIREIS AT MFA WERE DIRECT CAUSE FOR HIS STATEMENT AT TODAY'S MEETING THAT, ALTHOUGH RTG COUNCIL REP PAEN WANNAMETHEE HAD GIVEN GENERAL APPROVAL FOR MAKING A STATEMENT IN THE PWG, THE ACTUAL TEXT HAD NOT BEEN APPROVED.

3. STATEMENT NEVERTHELESS DOES REFLECT FRUSTRATION BY THOSE RTG OFFICIALS WORKING WITH ORGANIZATION OVER CONTINUED ATTEMPTS BY NON-REGIONAL MEMBERS, PRIMARILY AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, TO FURTHER DOWNPLAY SEATO AND LIMIT ITS ACTIVITIES. PRESENT INDICATION OF THIS ARISES IN CONTEXT OF ON-GOING NEGOTIATIONS RE FY 75 BUDGET. ALTHOUGH ALL MEMBERS HAVE NOW AGREED WITH US PROPOSAL THAT 21.5 PERCENT OF DEFICIT (RESULTING FROM PAKISTAN'S WITHDRAWAL AND FRENCH REFUSAL TO CONTRIBUTE) SHOULD BE SHARED EQUALLY AMONG REMAINING PAYING MEMBERS, THAILAND DID SO ONLY RELUCTANTLY. AT SAME TIME, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND STATED THAT THEY WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE MORE THAN IN PREVIOUS YEARS; THIS, WHEN RELATED TO THEIR INCREASED PERCENTAGES, WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF REDUCING THE BUDGET FROM ABOUT \$1.4 MILLION DOWN TO \$1.1 MILLION. SUCH A DRASTIC BUDGET CUT WOULD HAVE DIRECT IMPACT ON WHETHER SEATO COULD PERFORM ANY ACTIVITIES OF BENEFIT TO THE REGIONAL MEMBERS IN VIEW OF HIGH ADMINISTRATIVE AND OVERHEAD COSTS EVEN UNDER REDUCED STAFFING PATTERN.

4. ALTHOUGH THE RTG HAS DISOWNED ITS STATEMENT, CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE MAY HAVE BEEN DONE. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENTS, AND EVEN THE BRITISH LABOR GOVERNMENT, MIGHT WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO HASTEN THE DEMISE OF SEATO. THE AUSTRALIAN CHARGE SPECULATED TO US THAT IF THE MAY 24 TEXT WERE TO REACH MEMBERS OF THE LABOR PARTY OR THE PRESS IN AUSTRALIA, FOR INSTANCE, THERE WOULD BE GREATLY INCREASED PRESSURE ON THE GOA TO PULL THE PLUG ON SEATO.

5. IN VIEW OF OUR LONG-RANGE INTERESTS IN MAINTAINING OUR MILITARY ACCESS AND FLEXIBILITY IN THAILAND, AND THE THAI SENSITIVITY TO SEATO AS REVEALED IN THE INSUFFICIENTLY COORDINATED STATEMENT, WE THINK IT WOULD BE MOST UNWISE TO CONCUR IN ANY ACTIONS NOW WHICH  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BANGKO 08618 281309Z

WOULD DOWNPLAY SEATO FURTHER. WE BELIEVE THAT WHATEVER THE FEELINGS OF THE PWG MEMBER AND SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, THE THAI STILL ATTACH CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO THE EMBODIMENT OF THE US COMMITMENT IN SEATO AND WOULD CONSIDER FURTHER DEGRADATION OF SEATO AS A SIGNAL THAT THE US WAS CUTTING ITS TIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THIS WOULD BE DAMAGING TO OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AT A TIME WHEN OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE IS FALTERING AND WE HAVE BEEN LESS THAN FORTHCOMING ON OTHER REQUESTS FOR TRADE

CONCESSIONS AND EXCESS MILITARY EQUIPMENT.

6. WITHOUT GETTING OUT IN FRONT, WE INTEND, IN DISCUSSING THIS INCIDENT WITH OTHER COUNCIL REPS, TO (A) SAY THAT WE CONTINUE TO FIND SEATO USEFUL, (B) TO REAFFIRM OUR INTEREST IN CONTINUING TO PLAY A ROLE IN SEATO AND (C) REITERATE OUR SUPPORT FOR THE MANILA PACT.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: IF DEPARTMENT HAS ANY COMMENTS, WE MUST HAVE THEM NLT THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 30, PRIOR TO NEXT MEETING OF SEATO COUNCIL REPS.

MASTERS

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBERSHIP, BUDGETS, PRESS COMMENTS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, PUBLIC ATTITUDES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 MAY 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ShawDG  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974BANGKO08618  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740133-0269  
**From:** BANGKOK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740515/aaaaancm.tel  
**Line Count:** 127  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** A. STATE 81415 B. BANGKOK 8534  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ShawDG  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 24 APR 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <24 APR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <26 MAR 2003 by ShawDG>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SEATO: EMBASSY COMMENTS ON RTG STATEMENT  
**TAGS:** MARR, TH, SEATO  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005